1: Jenness--93 (1913-16) 1922 Copper Eskimo
116, 643, 555

"One of the most noticeable features in Eskimo society almost everywhere is the absence of chiefs, and the Copper Eskimos are no exception. A man acquires influence by his force of character, his energy and success in hunting, or his skill in magic. As long as these last him age but increases his influence, but when they fail his prestige and authority vanish. Although there were at least half a dozen shamans in Dolphin and Union strait, and Ikpakhuak himself professed no shamanistic powers, yet his personal dignity, his sagacity, and his prowess as a hunter won him the most prominent place among the natives of this region. He had no delegated powers, no established authority, but his counsels always carried the greatest weight and his advice was constantly sought in all matters of importance. On my first visit to the Puivlik settlement in 1914 I carried on a little trading in the crowded dance-house, and one of the natives attempted to rob me of a long machete. The rest looked on and watched the outcome. Only Ikpakhuak had the courage to interfere; he seized the man's wrist and forced him to give up the knife. Even Ikpakhuak's influence, however, could not always prevent stealing, or secure the restoration of stolen property, even among his own people. Two boxes of .30-30 cartridges which he had cached on the coast in the summer of 1914 were stolen, and it must have been one of his kinsmen who perpetrated the theft, since there were no other natives in the vicinity at the time. His nephew was robbed of a knife in the following winter and could obtain no redress. In the spring of 1916 a case of .30-30

ammunition was stolen from the expedition's cache at Bernard harbour; Ikpakhuak secured about 15 boxes from one of the thieves, but the remainder we had to recover ourselves by a display of force."

1: Jenness--93-94
116, 643, 555, 756

(1913-16) 1922

Copper Eskimo

"The shaman Uloksak, who was credited with wonderful powers of control over the world of spirits, was probably not more than thirty years of age. He was bolder and more unscrupulous than most of the Eskimos, and for a time had considerable authority among the natives around the Coppermine river; but a streak of cowardice in his nature finally brought discredit on him and destroyed much of his influence. Farther east, however, in Bathurst inlet, there was one man, Ilatsiak, who might with justice have claimed the title of chief. His fame as a shaman had spread far and wide, and he had no rival in that sphere. The most extraordinary powers were ascribed to him -- he could discover the past, foretell the future, and, more than any other shaman, control the supply of game and the elementary forces of nature. In all matters relating to everyday life his integrity was beyond question; he had never been known to abuse his influence, or divert it to his own selfish ends at the expense of his fellow-countrymen. In stature he was below the mean, and he was well advanced in years -- his beard, in fact, was quite white -- but he was still vigorous and full of energy, and his movements quick and decided. His pleasant and open countenance wore usually a somewhat grave expression, and his manner was calm and dignified, but there was no trace of arrogance in his demeanour. Natives in his presence would recount the most wonderful tales of his shamanistic feats, and he would listen quietly, without either assenting or denying. His small black eyes were shrewd and sparkling, indicating a personality far in advance of

the average Eskimo's. The natives of Bathurst inlet seemed to obey him without question. Frequently he led them on their migrations; he brought about forty of them with him to visit our station, and without question they were the most honest and the best behaved natives we ever had dealings with. The Rev. Mr. Girling informs me that Ilatsiak is now the very best friend that the [94] missionaries have in this region; all his influence is being exerted on their behalf. He possesses intelligence enough, it seems, to understand the new conditions created by the coming of the white men, and to try and adapt himself and his people to the change. Even Ilatsiak, however, will probably lose his authority when infirmity overtakes him, and when he is gone there will be no one to take his place. The Eskimo is intolerant of anything like restraint. Every man in his eyes has the same rights and the same privileges as every other man in the community. One may be a better hunter, or a more skilful dancer, or have greater control over the spiritual world, but this does not make him more than one member of a group in which all are free and theoretically equal."

6: Roberts and Jenness--12 (1914-1916) 1925 Copper Eskimo
116, 533, 574, 555

"The Copper Eskimos are constantly paying visits to other communities, and every visit of importance is marked by a dance in which the leading members on both sides take part. Every Eskimo, therefore, whether man or woman, can not only sing and dance, but can even in some measure compose dance-songs. Distinction in this field ranks almost as high as distinction in hunting, for the man who can improvise an appropriate song for any special occasion, or at least adapt new words to an old song, is a very valuable adjunct to the community. Certain individuals naturally possess greater ability than others; their songs become the most popular and spread far and wide. But there are no professional song-makers, no men who make the composition of songs their main business in life." (1)

"1. For dance-companions, or dancing-associates, as they are there called, see Vol. XII, Pt. A., pp. 86-87, 225."